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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DUSHANBE 000555

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STATE FOR OES/STC ATTN: SHIRLEY HART

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KSCA](#) [TSPL](#) [SENV](#) [AMGT](#) [OTRA](#) [APER](#) [TI](#)

SUBJECT: EMBASSY DUSHANBE REQUESTS FOR EMBASSY SCIENCE FELLOW

REF: STATE 30914

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¶1. Embassy Dushanbe requests one Embassy Science Fellow for either of the two proposed projects listed below. Tajikistan is a country with a predominantly Muslim population and is a member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Post appreciates OES' initiative to give special consideration to member countries. As a post-Soviet country, Tajikistan has a well-educated group of scientists ready to cooperate with scientists from the United States on research projects.

¶2. Post submits the following two proposals and would be flexible to design a scope of work that is interesting to the Embassy Science Fellow and furthers the U.S. goal in Tajikistan of helping to create a healthy Tajik society which would build stability and prosperity. The poorest country in Central Asia, Tajikistan's population faces many health challenges. The projects would help to strengthen Tajikistan's public health system so that it may respond appropriately to the outbreak of disease, such as Avian Influenza. The projects would also help Tajikistan tackle the more common diseases such as HIV/AIDS, cholera, or tuberculosis.

¶3. Proposal One: Fighting Infectious Disease Capacity Assessment

Embassy Dushanbe requests a science fellow to assess the capabilities of different infectious disease labs and make recommendations concerning any needs for biosafety training or lab upgrades. The Embassy Science Fellow would work closely with the Center for Disease Control on its infectious disease surveillance work.

Post envisions the Embassy Science Fellow would:

- Meet with scientists and lab directors at public health and veterinary labs to assess their disease surveillance, control, and research capabilities.
- Assess the current state of these labs from a biosafety perspective to identify high-priority needs for training and equipment that would enable Tajik scientists to work more safely and effectively.
- Identify areas for donor assistance.
- Assess the status and needs of regional labs in addition to the main labs located in Dushanbe.
- Write an overview of Tajikistan's laboratory and disease surveillance infrastructure.
- Assist in organizing a disease surveillance workshop.
- Meet with scientists working on US-funded disease research projects to assess progress and needs.
- Provide technical advice to the Ministry of Health and/or Ministry of Agriculture on particular disease control priorities they have identified.

¶4. Embassy Dushanbe did not host a Fellow last year and would like to resubmit the following proposal from last year for consideration.

¶5. Proposal 2: Solutions for Water Potability and Water-borne Diseases

Embassy Dushanbe requests an Embassy Science Fellow to conduct research on the overall situation and solutions for water potability and water-borne disease in Tajikistan.

In Tajikistan, water-borne diarrheal diseases carry great danger for the health of the people. According to available data, (which, notably is insufficient), 74,318 (in 1999) to 66,629 (2003) cases of diarrheal diseases are registered annually. Approximately 80% of these cases are children under 14 years of age.

The water supply quality is greatly affected by bad sanitary technical conditions of pump stations and distribution networks, lack of chlorine reagents, coagulants, and a lack of spare parts for the facilities.

In 2001, water analyses in Tajikistan indicate that 35.3 % of the samples did not meet the microbiological standards. The percentage of samples not meeting the microbiological standards was reported to be 30.7 % in 2002. The comparative analysis on gastrointestinal infectious diseases for the last 5 years (1999-2003) has shown that water is the major factor for infectious diseases outbreaks.

Moreover, treating diarrheal diseases is expensive, since medical aid is often not sought until the latest stages of the disease, when heavy dehydration requires expensive medicines for the treatment. More than 568,000 or 4.5 % beds per day in the hospitals throughout the country are occupied by patients with diarrhea, which requires a large chunk of the state health budget. In addition, diarrheal diseases have a negative impact

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on the labor market. (All statistics above come from the International Science and Technology Center in Russia.) No affordable and feasible solutions have been presented to fix this rampant problem.

A Fellow could complete the following activities:

- Investigate the current water supply system and water-borne diseases in Tajikistan.
- Create a summary of the current national and international programs in place to ameliorate the problem of water-borne disease.
- Present a concrete action plan for how Tajikistan can take specific, affordable steps towards improving the supply of potable water and decreasing the frequency of water-borne diarrheal disease in the country.

¶6. Additional Skills Required

Knowledge of Russian language is strongly preferred in addition to a basic knowledge of and experience working in the former Soviet Union. Post would really appreciate it if OES would be able to provide funds for the use of a translator should we identify a qualified and enthusiastic candidate without Russian skills. Post would also consider a candidate with Persian/Tajiki language skills.

¶7. Preferred Timeframe

Embassy Dushanbe requests an ESF for a period of one to three months to arrive no earlier than September 2007.

¶8. Post Commitment

Post can guarantee the Fellow housing (details to be

determined), office space, in-country travel arrangements and logistical support as needed and stipulated in reftel.

¶9. Clearances

Post requests the Fellow have a Secret security clearance. The Fellow should obtain all necessary vaccinations and medication prior to travel to Tajikistan. Post discourages any accompanying family members.

¶10. Point of Contact:

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